chapter 45 Drayden's choice

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TO NEXT WEEK !?
CHANGING THE DATE!?
THE GYM LEADERS' DISAPPE-ARANCE ?
GRR
MISTER MAYOR, DOES THIS HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH THE GYM LEADERS DISAPPEAR-ANCE?
IS THIS THE REASON WHY YOU TOOK THIS DECISION?
NACRENE CITY, CASTELIA CITY, NIMBASA CITY, DRIFTVEIL CITY, MISTRALTON CITY, AND EVEN STRIATON CITY!
Y... YES! IN THE LAST TWO WEEKS, TESTIMONIES FROM TRAINERS WHO WENT TO GYMS AND FOUND THEM CLOSED HAVE BEEN MULTIPLYING!

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I DO NOT KNOW!
WHERE ARE THEY?
WA HA HA HA!
YOU'RE QUITE SMART! OF COURSE ALL THIS IS RELATED
AND I HAVE NO IDEA
THAT'S ALL I KNOW, AND ALL I CAN SAY...
...AND DESPITE ALL OF OUR SEARCHES, WE ARE STILL UNABLE TO FIND THEM
WE ARE DOING EVERYTHING IN OUR POWER TO FIND THEM, BUT ARE STILL WITHOUT A CLUE.
WHY HAVE THE LEADERS DISAPPEARED?
...THE TRAINERS' WORRIES HAVE TO BE ADDRESSED.
INDEED, SINCE THE LEADERS ARE MISSING...

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WE CAN CHANGE THE DATE, BUT WE CAN'T CHANGE THE RULES.
THE CHANCES OF EVERYONE MUST BE EQUAL, WHICH IS WHY...
WITHOUT THE LEADERS, THERE'S NO WAY TO GATHER THEM!
OF COURSE, SINCE THEY HAVE TO GATHER ALL THE BADGES IN ORDER TO PARTICIPATE!
I KNOW, I KNOW
...WILL BE ABLE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE LEAGUE NEXT WEEK.
PLAIN AND SIMPLE
THIS MEANS THAT ONLY TRAINERS WHO ALREADY HAVE 8 BADGES...
THAT IS ALL, GET THE MESSAGE ACROSS.
WAIT!
WH-AT...
HUM.
MISTER MAYOR, YOUR NEXT APPOINT-MENT-
WHAAAAAAT?

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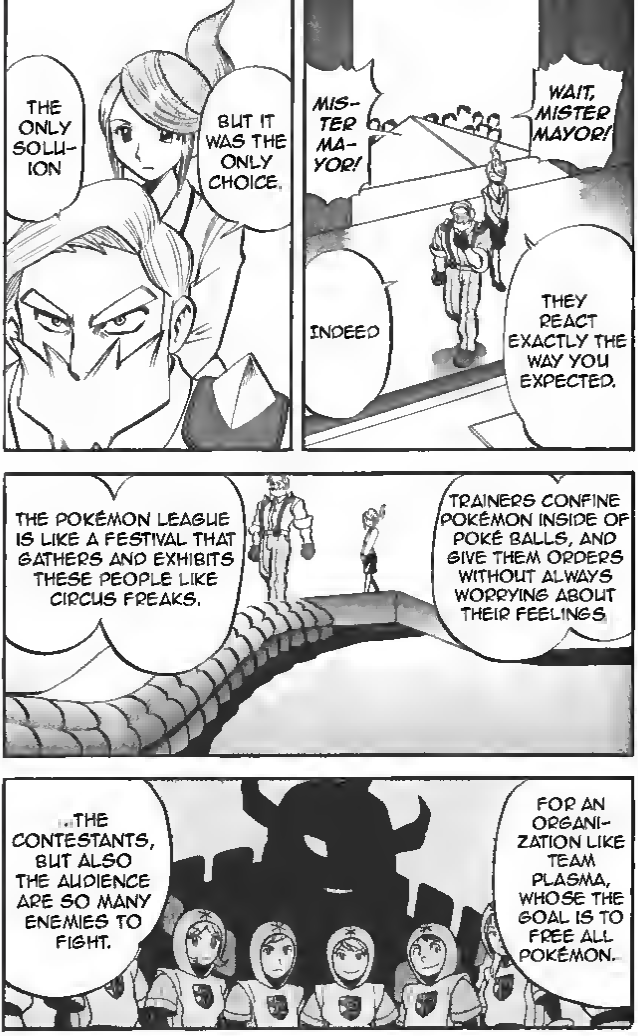
THE ONLY SOLUTION
BUT IT WAS THE ONLY CHOICE.
MISTER MAYOR!
WAIT, MISTER MAYOR!
INDEED
THEY REACT EXACTLY THE WAY YOU EXPECTED.
THE POKÉMON LEAGUE IS LIKE A FESTIVAL THAT GATHERS AND EXHIBITS THESE PEOPLE LIKE CIRCUS FREAKS.
TRAINERS CONFINE POKÉMON INSIDE OF POKÉ BALLS, AND GIVE THEM ORDERS WITHOUT ALWAYS WORRYING ABOUT THEIR FEELINGS.
...THE CONTESTANTS, BUT ALSO THE AUDIENCE ARE SO MANY ENEMIES TO FIGHT.
FOR AN ORGANIZATION LIKE TEAM PLASMA, WHOSE THE GOAL IS TO FREE ALL POKÉMON.

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..IT WOULD BE A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY TO SHOW THEIR AMBITION TO EVERYONE.
IF THEY COULD ELIMINATE ALL THESE TRAINERS, IN FRONT OF ALL THE SPECTATORS ...
YET, IT'S BEEN AWHILE SINCE THEY GOT THEIR HANDS ON IT.
WE DIDN'T HEAR FROM THEM SINCE THE DARK STONE INCIDENT..
THEY'LL COME, FOR SURE!
..OR THEY DIDN'T, BUT THEY KEEP HIDING FOR ANOTHER REASON
EITHER THEY MANAGED TO RETURN ZEKROM TO ITS ORIGINAL FORM...
THIS CHANGE OF DATE IS A BAIT, NOTHING MORE!
I HAVE TO MAKE SURE MYSELF.

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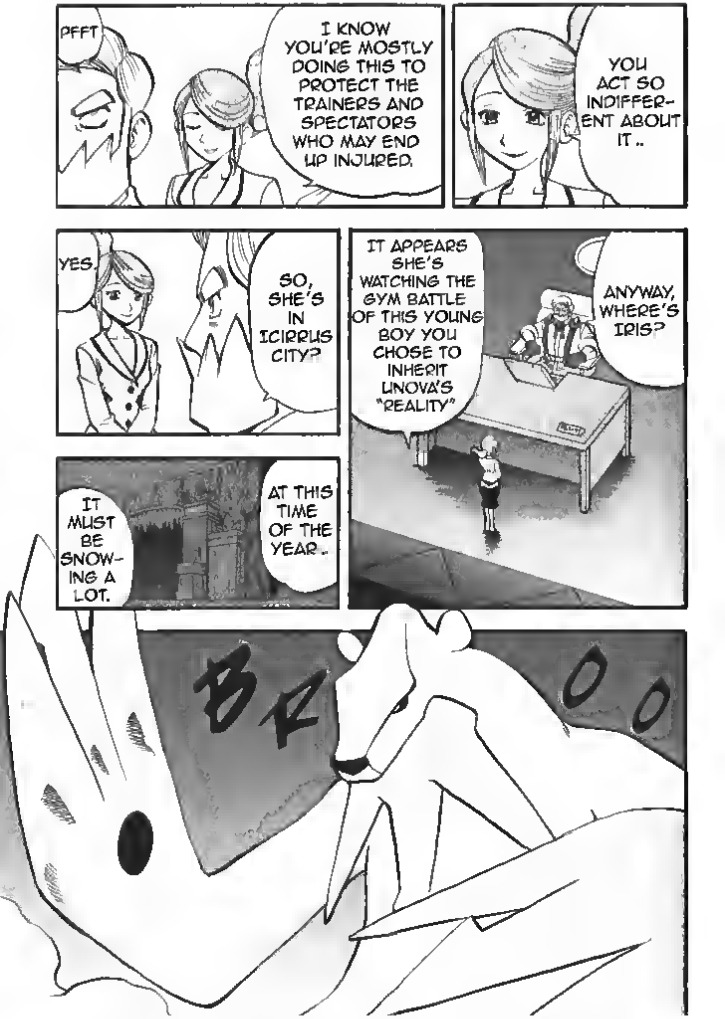
PFFT
I KNOW YOU'RE MOSTLY DOING THIS TO PROTECT THE TRAINERS AND SPECTATORS WHO MAY END UP INJURED.
YOU ACT SO INDIFFERENT ABOUT IT..
YES.
SO, SHE'S IN ICIRRUS CITY?
IT APPEARS SHE'S WATCHING THE GYM BATTLE OF THIS YOUNG BOY YOU CHOSE TO INHERIT UNOVA'S "REALITY"
ANYWAY, WHERE'S IRIS?
IT MUST BE SNOWING A LOT.
AT THIS TIME OF THE YEAR..
BROOO

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THIS STRATEGY ALLOWS IT TO PROTECT ITS INJURED MEMBERS.
IT CREATED ICE CLAWS.
BY FREEZING ITS BREATH ON ITS EXTREMITIES.
MEGA...
PROTECT YOURSELF!
FWIII
PHEW! THAT WAS CLOSE!
WITH SUCH LONG CLAWS, ITS ATTACKS ARE MUCH FASTER
HUH?
THAT REMINDS ME OF SOMETHING... A MOVIE?
AZO!

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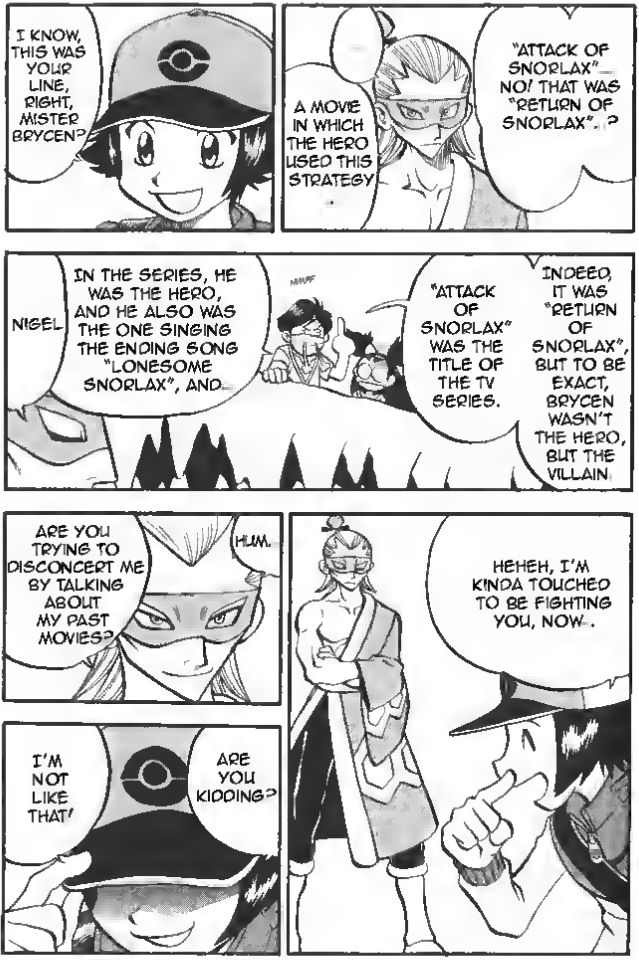
I KNOW, THIS WAS YOUR LINE, RIGHT, MISTER BRYCEN?
A MOVIE IN WHICH THE HERO USED THIS STRATEGY.
"ATTACK OF SNORLAX"— NO! THAT WAS "RETURN OF SNORLAX"...?
NIGEL
IN THE SERIES, HE WAS THE HERO, AND HE ALSO WAS THE ONE SINGING THE ENDING SONG "LONESOME SNORLAX", AND—
HMPF
"ATTACK OF SNORLAX" WAS THE TITLE OF THE TV SERIES.
INDEED, IT WAS "RETURN OF SNORLAX", BUT TO BE EXACT, BRYCEN WASN'T THE HERO, BUT THE VILLAIN.
ARE YOU TRYING TO DISCONCERT ME BY TALKING ABOUT MY PAST MOVIES?
HUM.
HEHEH, I'M KINDA TOUCHED TO BE FIGHTING YOU, NOW.
I'M NOT LIKE THAT!
ARE YOU KIDDING?

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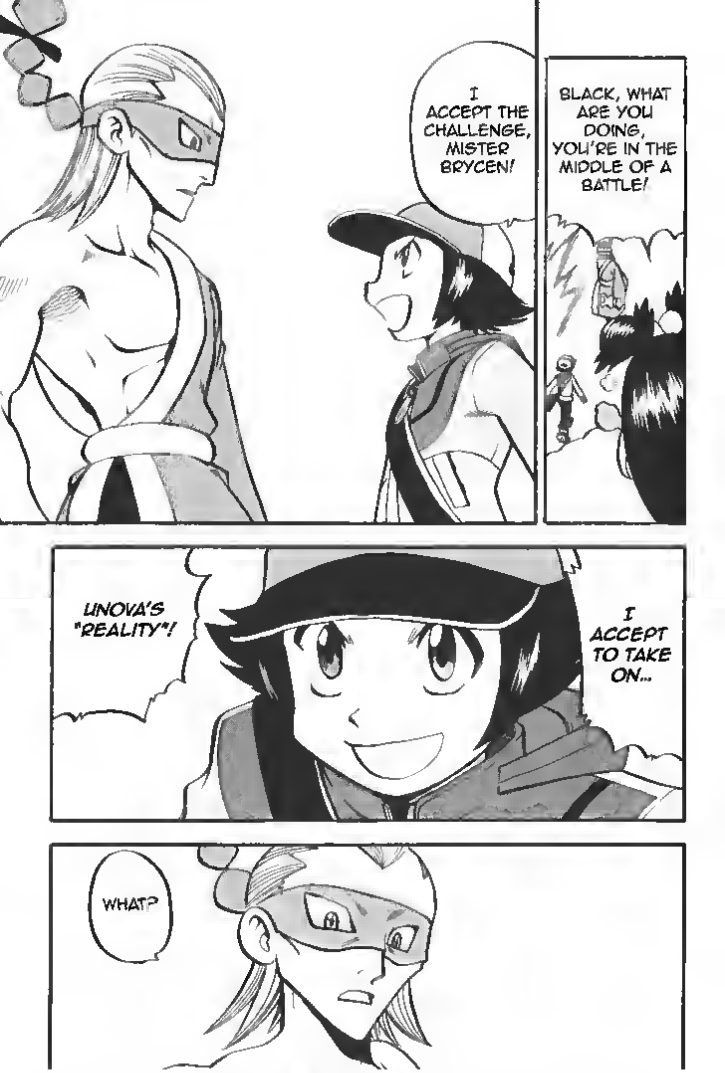
I ACCEPT THE CHALLENGE, MISTER BRYCEN!
BLACK, WHAT ARE YOU DOING, YOU'RE IN THE MIDDLE OF A BATTLE!
UNOVA'S "REALITY"!
I ACCEPT TO TAKE ON...
WHAT?

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I HAVE TO DEFEAT ALDER!
AND SINCE I WANT TO DEFEAT THE LEAGUE
...THAT N SAID HE WOULD OVERCOME THE CHAMPION
I REA-LIZE
I ALSO HAVE TO OVERCOME THE CHAMPION
THEREFORE
AND IF HE HAS ZEKROM, I NEED RESHIRAM TO FACE HIM!
N AND I HAVE THE SAME GOAL!
BUT FIRST
I'LL DEFEAT ALDER
WHAT I'M FEELING DEEP DOWN TELLS ME THE SAME THING
I MAY BE WRONG, BUT

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THAT'LL GET RID OF THE DIFFERENCE OF REACH BETWEEN THEM!
IT WAS ONLY PROTECTING ITSELF IN ORDER TO WAIT FOR ITS EVOLUTION?
IT EVOLVED INTO CARRA-COSTA!
BAM!
THAT'S WHAT ALLOWS IT TO DODGE EVERY ATTACK!
BUT IT WAS RIGHT HERE!
IT MISS-ED!
A BEARTIC WITH THIS ABILITY INCREASES ITS EVASION WHEN DURING HAIL STORMS, LIKE THE ONE VANILLISH STARTED EARLIER.
"SNOW CLOAK"

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IT'S ALL YOURS.
THIS IS THE LIGHT STONE.
HERE.
NO NEED TO THANK ME.
DON'T FORGET..
A TOUGH BATTLE WITH TEAM PLASMA AWAITS YOU.
THERE'S A RISK THAT THIS STRUGGLE WILL BREAK YOUR MIND
—THAT YOUR REALITY MIGHT BE SHATTERED.
I CAN'T AVOID IT IF I WANT TO REACH MY GOAL.
DOESN'T MATTER!

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EH?
I'LL BATTLE YOU AS MANY TIMES AS NEEDED FOR YOUR DREAM OF WINNING THE LEAGUE TO COME TRUE.
YOU CAN COME BACK AND CHALLENGE ME ANY TIME.
THAT'S A GOOD ATTITUDE.
NO.
WAIT, THAT MEANS THE LEAGUE WON'T STOP?
DRAYDEN AND ME HAVE DECIDED TO OPEN THE LEAGUE...
HM?
I SEE... IN THAT CASE, I'LL FEEL FREE TO TAKE YOUR BADGE..
...NO MATTER WHAT

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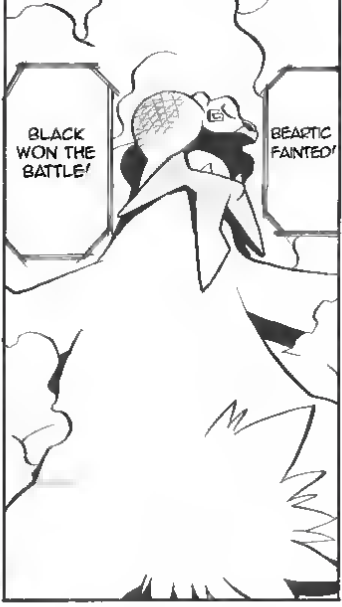

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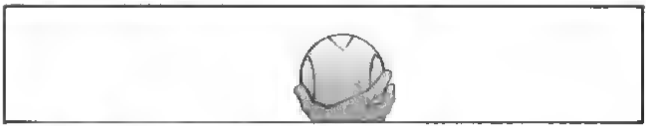

HOW OPTI-MIS-TIC.
IT'LL GO BACK TO ITS ORIGINAL FORM EVENTUALLY, NO WORRIES!
OH WELL, DRAYDEN TOLD ME IT CHOSE ME, AND HE IS A DRAGON-TYPE POKÉMON EXPEPT, SO EVERYTHING SHOULD BE FINE.
OOPS! LOOKS LIKE IT TAKES MORE THAN A NICE SENTENCE!

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CLING!
YEAH!
BLACK, HERE'S THE PROOF OF YOUR VICTORY, THE FREEZE BADGE.
HIS MAIN POKÉMON IS A DRUDDIGON WITH THE "SHEER FORCE" ABILITY, AND...
I ALREADY KNOW IT BY HEART!
THE LAST ONE IS DRAYDEN'S, AT OPELUCID CITY!
AND I'LL BE ABLE TO ENTER THE LEAGUE!
ONLY ONE TO GO...
ONE LEFT!
SEVEN BADGES!
WHAT'S THE MATTER, IRIS?
W- W- WAIT, BLACK! WAIT!

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WHAT, WHAT DID HE...
JUST COME!
JUST COME LISTEN TO WHAT DRAYDEN JUST SAID ON TV!
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
IT'S SHOT, WE WON'T BE ABLE TO GET THERE BEFORE THE LEAGUE OPENS, IT'S WAY TOO LATE!
. WILL BE ABLE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE LEAGUE NEXT WEEK
THIS MEANS THAT ONLY TRAINERS WHO ALREADY HAVE 8 BADGES...
WHAAAAT!?
WH-WH-WH-

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